

May 15, 2007

Dear Citizens of Orem:

You may have already heard about the infestation of the destructive Japanese beetle in your neighborhood.

The Utah spirit of working together is again evident in this threat of the Japanese beetle. The supportive response from community leaders and the general public has been overwhelming. We recognize the sacrifice that you are making by not planting vegetable gardens; and I offer a special thanks to you. But we now have the opportunity to eliminate this pest that can cause considerable damage to our lawns and gardens, and Utah's agriculture industry.

The treatment plan has a good chance to eliminate the problem. If Japanese beetle becomes established in Utah, the costs to homeowners to control will be millions of dollars per year.

The Utah Department of Agriculture and Food will continue to monitor other areas to make sure this is the only infested area. At this time we have only one confirmed beetle outside of this area. Our insect monitoring program should identify any other areas of infestation this summer.

The challenge of making personal contact with each home and property owner is overwhelming. We have contacted more than 50% of the residents in the treatment area and will continue to make door-to-door contact with as many people as possible. Of the people we have talked with, more than 95% of them support the plan.

Therefore in order to give our plan the best hope of success, we are moving ahead with an emergency declaration to treat the entire Orem infested area.

Again, THANK YOU for your support and help.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Leonard M. Blackham".

Leonard M Blackham
Commissioner

Ps If you are among the few residents who are very sensitive to these kinds of products, may I suggest you visit family or friends for an hour or two until the application dries.